

# RECRUITING GENDER BALANCED BOARDS & COMMISSIONS: A GUIDE FOR CITIES & COUNTIES



# Gender balance law in Iowa

- State level: has been required since 1987
- In 2009, extended to county & city boards and commissions (effective Jan. 1, 2012)

# Iowa Code section 69.16A

## “Gender balance”

2009 legislation added subsection 2. The statute now reads:

1. All appointive boards, commissions, committees, and councils of the state established by the Code, if not otherwise provided by law, shall be gender balanced. No person shall be appointed or reappointed to any board, commission, committee, or council established by the Code if that appointment or reappointment would cause the number of members of the board, commission, committee, or council of one gender to be greater than one-half the membership of the board, commission, committee, or council plus one if the board, commission, committee, or council is composed of an odd number of members. If the board, commission, committee, or council is composed of an even number of members, not more than one-half of the membership shall be of one gender. If there are multiple appointing authorities for a board, commission, committee, or council, they shall consult each other to avoid a violation of this section.

2. All appointive boards, commissions, committees, and councils of a political subdivision of the state that are established by the Code, if not otherwise provided by law, shall be gender balanced as provided by subsection 1 unless the political subdivision has made a good faith effort to appoint a qualified person to fill a vacancy on a board, commission, committee, or council in compliance with subsection 1 for a period of three months but has been unable to make a compliant appointment. In complying with the requirements of this subsection, political subdivisions shall utilize a fair and unbiased method of selecting the best qualified applicants. This subsection shall not prohibit an individual whose term expires prior to January 1, 2012, from being reappointed even though the reappointment continues an inequity in gender balance.

# Iowa: the general picture

Since the addition to the law, are the boards and commissions in Iowa's counties and cities gender balanced?

# Gender balance in Iowa's counties

Percentage of  
total seats  
held by  
women:

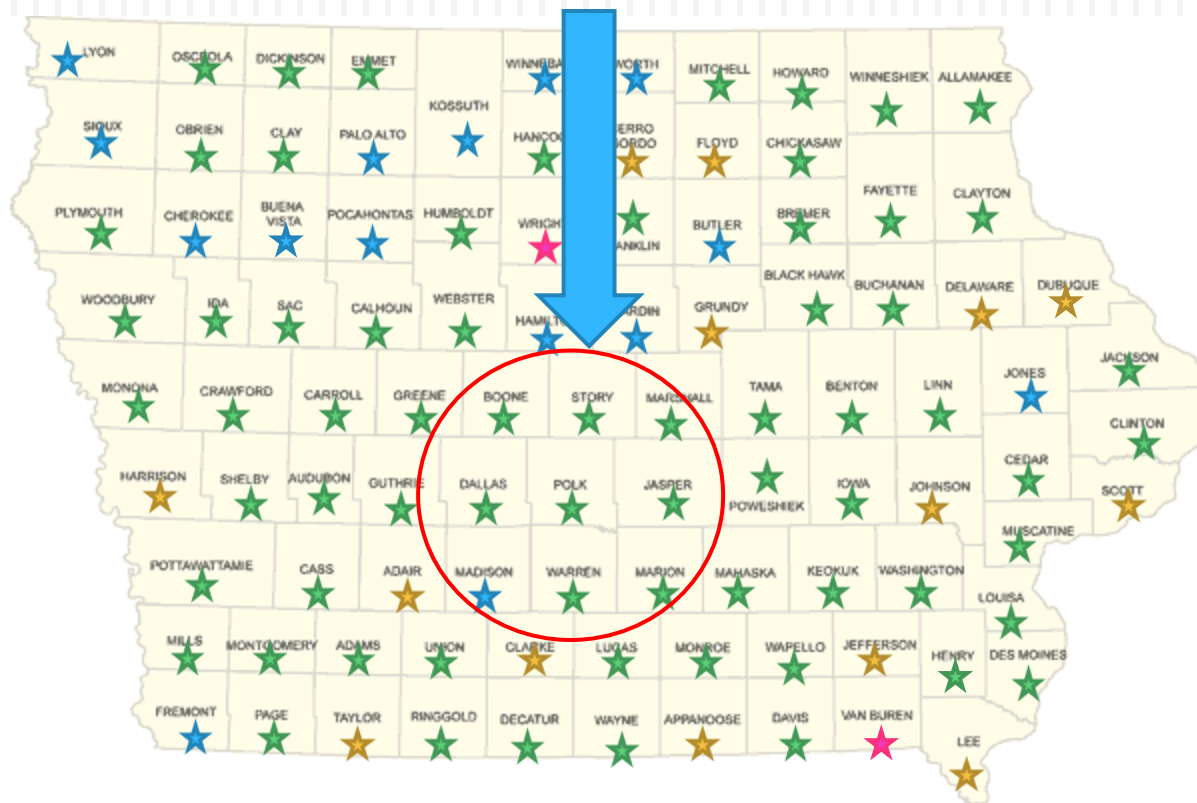
★ 20% or less

★ 21-35%

★ 36-49%

★ 50% & up

In the Polk County/Des Moines area



**Source:** Gender Balance Project: County Boards – March 2014 Data Summary, Carrie Chapman Catt Center for Women in Politics & Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women

# Gender balance in Iowa's counties: The good news

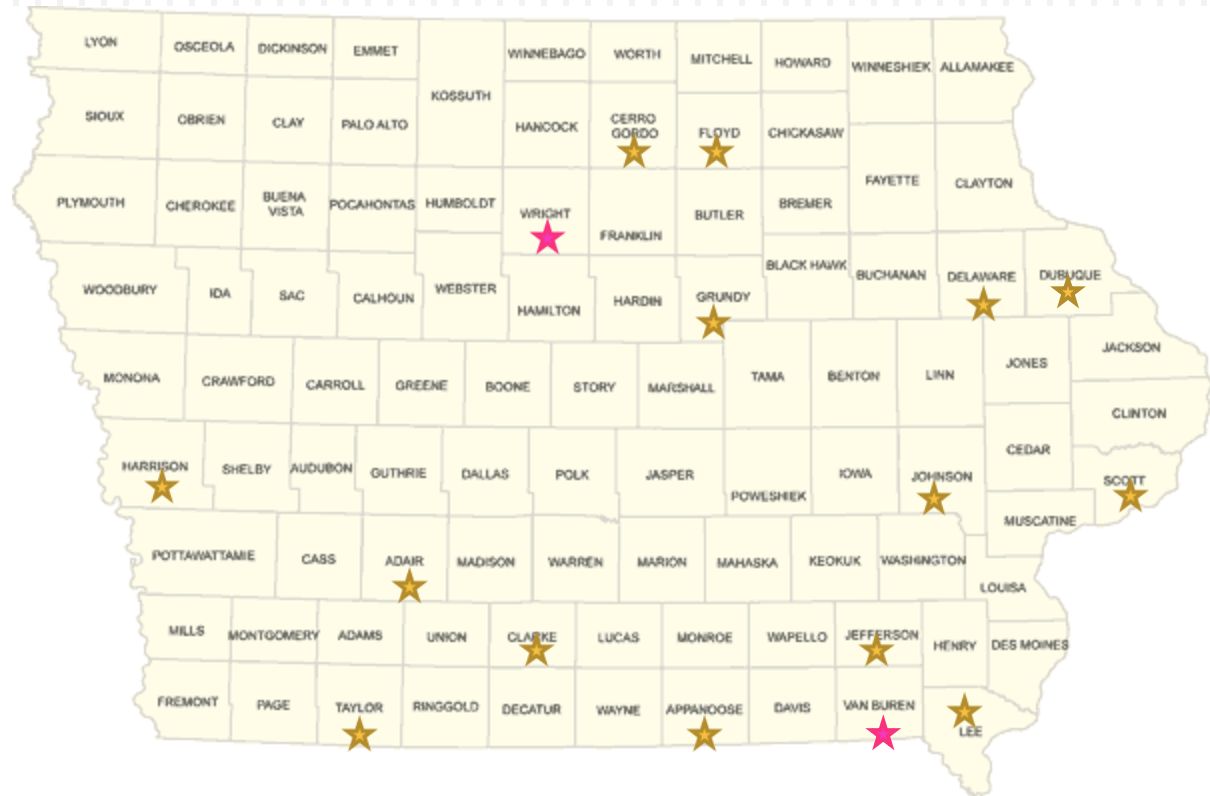
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# Gender balance in Iowa's counties:

## The *bad* news

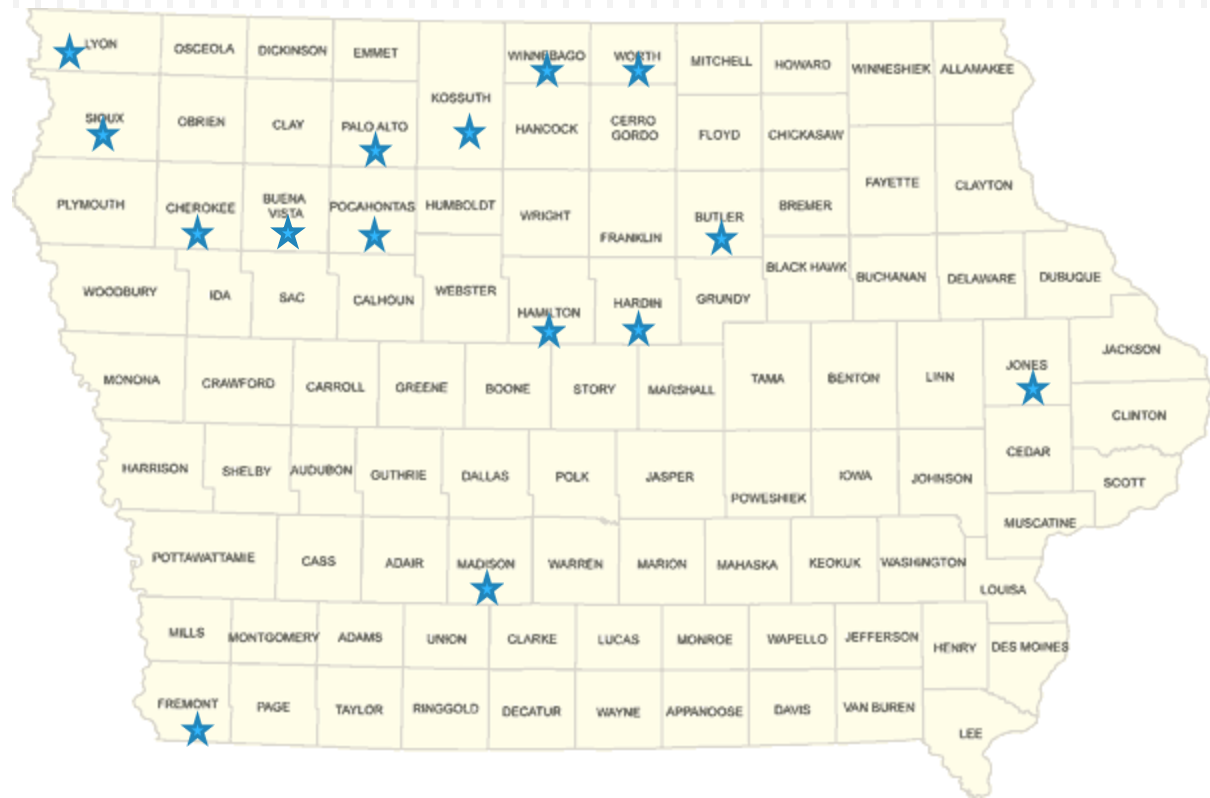
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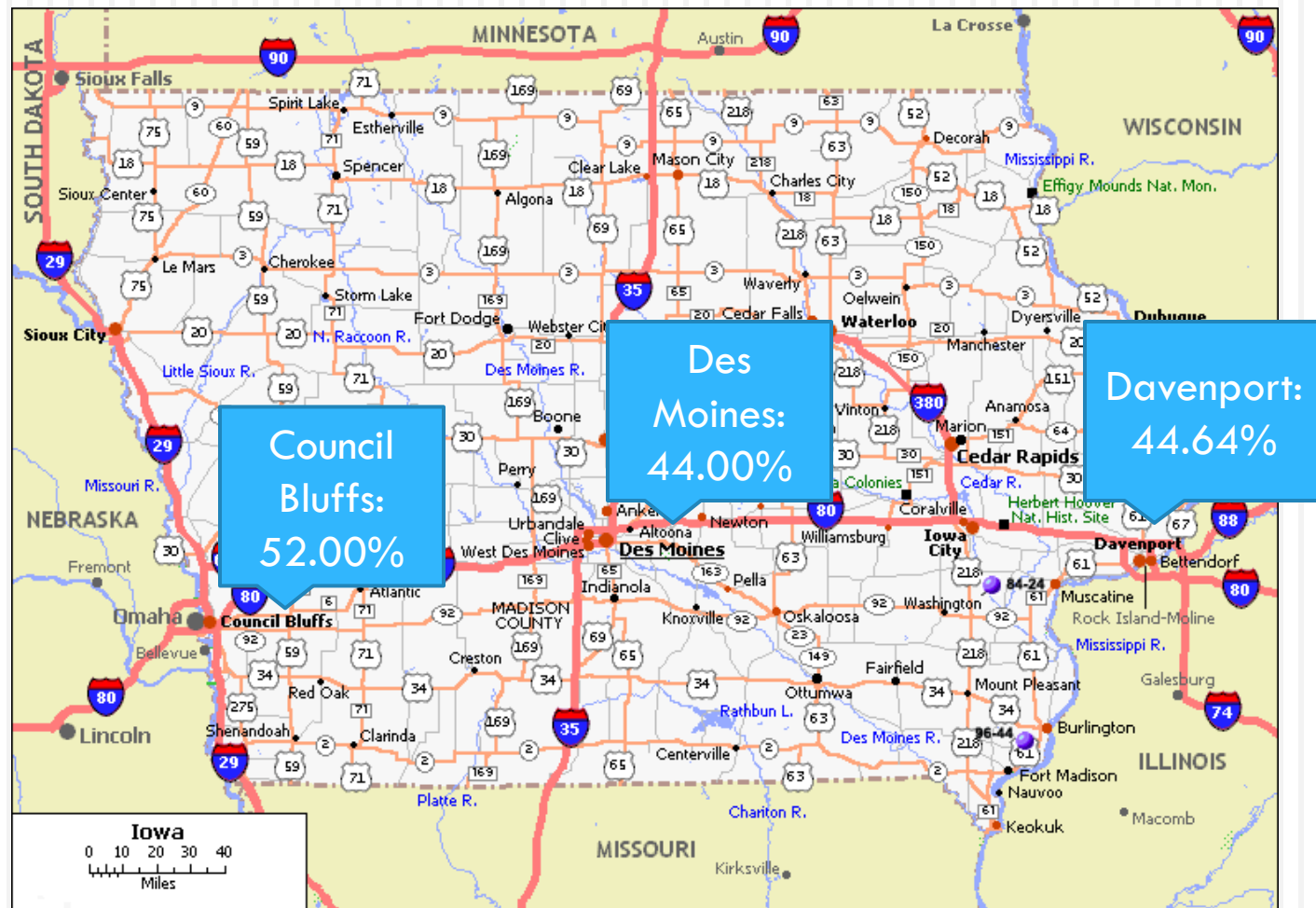
★ 36-49%

★ 50% & up



**Source:** Gender Balance Project: County Boards – March 2014 Data Summary, Carrie Chapman Catt Center for Women in Politics & Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women

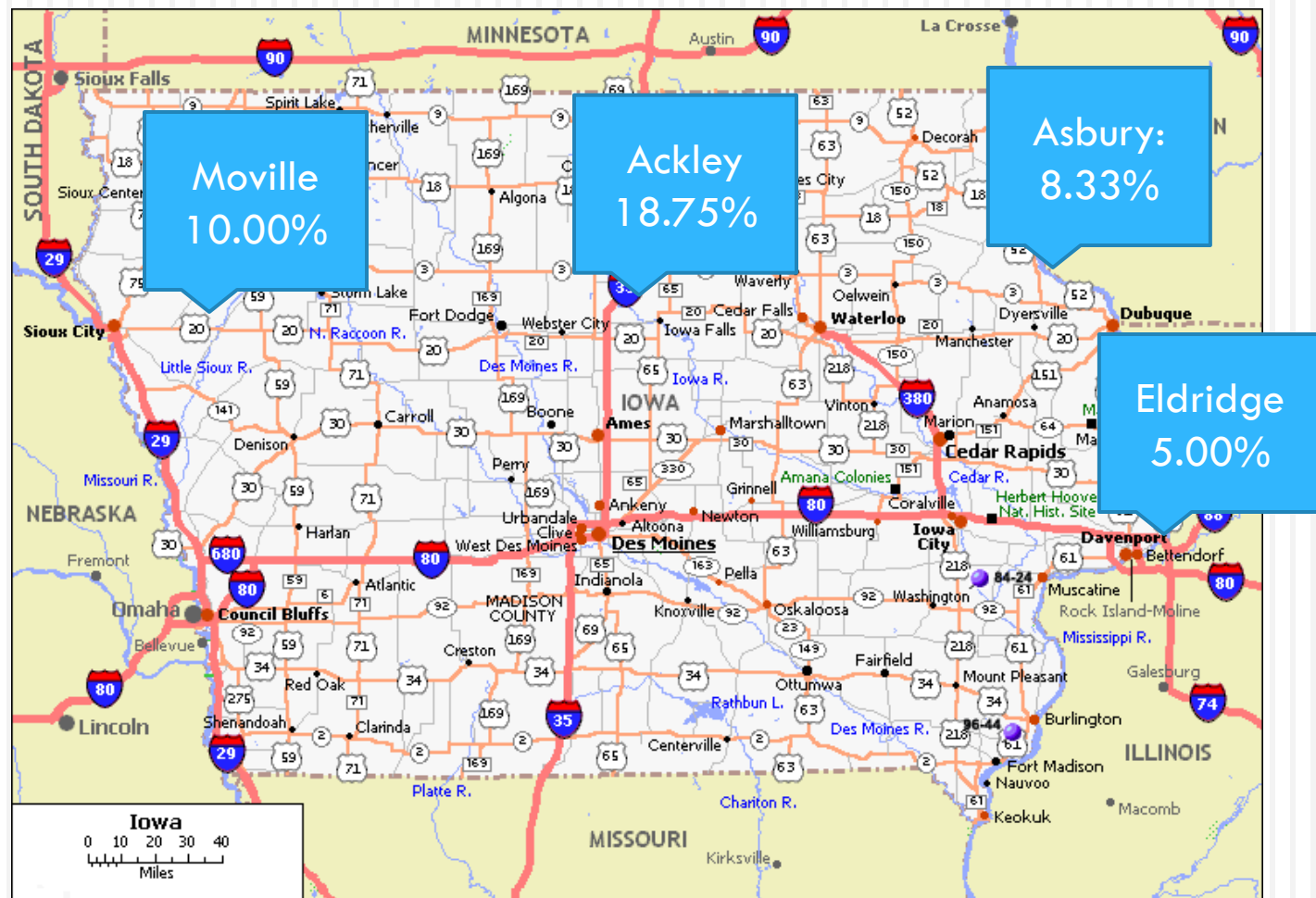
# Gender balance in Iowa's cities



**Source:** Gender Balance Project: Municipal Boards April 2014 Data Summary, Carrie Chapman Catt Center for Women in Politics & Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women

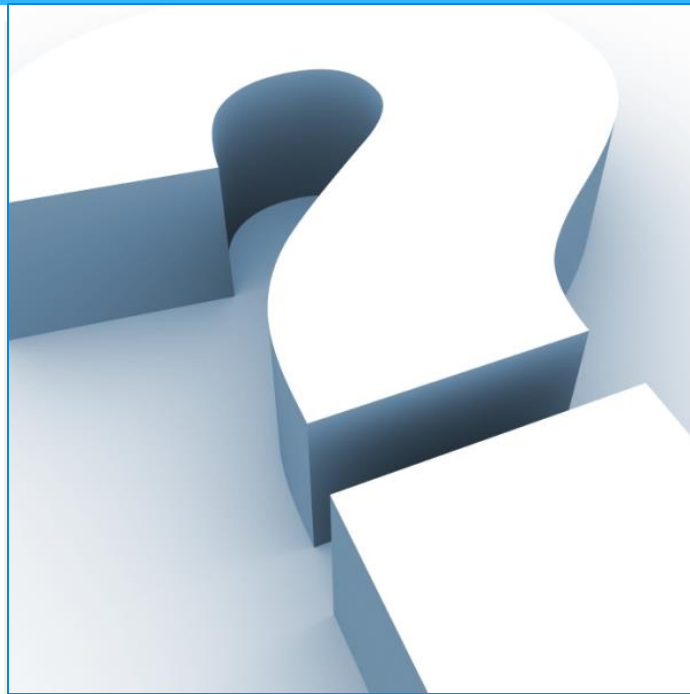


# Gender balance in Iowa's cities



**Source:** Gender Balance Project: Municipal Boards April 2014 Data Summary, Carrie Chapman Catt Center for Women in Politics & Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women

What can you do about this?



# #1 rule: Target women in recruitment



# Why?

- Diversity of experience critical to communities
- Creates more visibility for board/commission in area
- Women underrepresented, especially on boards/commissions that make economic decisions
- Easiest way to fill seats
  - Women volunteer at higher rates
  - Adult women outnumber adult men in 90 of Iowa's 99 counties

# How?

- Review your application, protocol, or process
  - Is it transparent?
  - Simple?
  - Formal?
- May wish to revisit requirements for appointments (i.e. Veterans Board eliminating requirement for veterans of specific wars)

# Good examples

## APPLICATION TO SERVE ON A CITY BOARD OR COMMISSION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ How long have you been a resident: \_\_\_\_\_

I am interested in serving on the following Boards/Commission(s): \_\_\_\_\_

List Boards/Commission(s) you currently serve: \_\_\_\_\_

List Boards/Commission(s) you have served on in the past: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe why you are interested and what knowledge and/or experience you have that would be beneficial to the community: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Please return to:

\_\_\_\_\_ has formed various Boards and Commissions comprised of volunteers from the community to serve in an advisory capacity to the mayor and city council. Vacancies are created when a member moves permanently from the city or the term ends. The City of \_\_\_\_\_ makes every effort to organize a diversified group of citizens representing gender balance, a variety of ages and interests. If you are interested in volunteering to serve on any Board or Commission, please submit your application to the Mayor at City Hall.

**\_\_\_\_\_ Park and Recreation Advisory Commission (Meets the first Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m.)**

The commission is comprised of seven members, created to advise and make recommendations to the city council with reference to the development, furtherance and proper facilitation of parks, playgrounds, community facilities, and recreation within the city. All members shall be bona fide citizens and residents of the city and over the age of eighteen. Appointments to the commission are for three-year terms.

**Library Board Trustee (Meets the second Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m.)**

The seven-member board is appointed by the Mayor of \_\_\_\_\_ and approved by the \_\_\_\_\_ City Council.

**Planning and Zoning Commission (Meets the second and fourth Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m.)**

This commission consists of seven members who are citizens of the city and who are qualified by knowledge or experience to act in matters pertaining to development of a city plan. The mayor, subject to approval of the council appoints members. Term of office shall be five years.

**Utility Advisory Commission (Meets quarterly on the second Monday of the month at 6:00 p.m.)**

The City of \_\_\_\_\_ maintains a Public Utility Advisory Committee which acts as the Stormwater Advisory Committee composed of local residents with varying professions and backgrounds. The Committee is intended to provide a community perspective on public utility and stormwater issues and meet monthly to attempt to accomplish goals the group sets forth.

**Board of Adjustment (Meets on an as needed basis)**

The board consists of five members appointed by the council. It has the power and duty to hear and decide appeals where it is alleged there is an error in any order, requirements, decision, or determination made by the zoning administrator in enforcement of this title.

**Construction Board of Appeals (Meets on an as needed basis)**

The board consists of five members appointed by the council. It has the power and duty to hear and decide appeals where it is alleged there is an error in any order, requirements, decision, or determination made by the Code Inspector. Appointments to the board are for three years.

In addition, residents can become informed through the City Council.

**\_\_\_\_\_ City Council (Meets the first and third Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m.)**

The Council is comprised of elected officials, five council members and a Mayor, serving offsetting four year terms. City staff encourages community members to attend the Council meetings and enthusiastically welcomes all interested residents to run for city office.

# Simple strategies for recruiting women

5 simple steps you can take that work



# Step 1: Use help of local organizations

- Work with women from local groups to brainstorm messages might resonate with women in your community
- Use local orgs to get out the word about skill set required (i.e., labor union)
- Potential target: newcomers looking to meet people

## Step 2: Increase/maintain visibility

- Hold info sessions (i.e. local group looking for lunch speaker)
- Maintain visibility in your community, emphasizing boards/commissions open to diversity and change
- Post information about each board/commission in public places and/or on website

# Step 3: Stay positive

- Make sure you/representatives of city/county are positive in the way you talk about opportunities to serve
- If there are ongoing problems with specific boards/commissions (i.e., straying from the agenda), address them before recruiting new applicants

# Step 4: Think outside the box

- Cross train board/commission members & encourage them to try something new
- Bring in outside observers to a meeting to determine if there is anything that may not be inviting (i.e., group advertises, “Wives are welcome”)

# Step 5: ASK

- Ask for recommendations of candidates from community leaders
- If you know a qualified woman – ASK
  - Women often have to be asked and encouraged to apply
  - Some have grown up in families/cultures that undervalue women's contributions
  - May believe that “traditional female” approaches to leadership (i.e. consensus building) are not what you are seeking

# Looking for qualified candidates?

- It's easy!
- Visit the Friends of ICSW talent bank database

[www.friendsoficsw.org](http://www.friendsoficsw.org)



**Friends of**  
the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women

*Iowa Women's Hall  
of Fame 2012*



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Contact us

Talent Bank

She Matters

Women You Know

Hall of Fame 2014

### Women You Know 2014

**Women You Know,  
Women You Want to Meet**  
*"An uncommonly delightful  
fundraiser for the Friends"*

Monday, October 20, 2014  
5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Hosted by Susan Judkins Josten  
and Whitney Judkins at  
**Susan's home in Clive, Iowa**

**Thank you to our  
sponsors!!**

Helen Adams  
Brooke Axiotis  
Alicia Claypool  
Beth Coonan  
Joy Corning  
Des Moines Police Department  
Michelle Durand-Adams  
Betty Grundberg  
Rachelle Hunt Russian  
Gail Kotval  
Andrea McGuire  
Charlotte Nelson  
Jill Olsen  
Sally Pederson  
Phyllis Peters

## Talent Bank

*Building gender balance. Shaping our communities.*

We are looking for Women to be role models, leaders, thinkers—ready to use your voice and ideas—ready to shape our local communities through investing your time and matching your capabilities to community boards and commissions in your area. We want you in our growing Talent Bank. [Learn more!](#)

The Friends Board is a great group of dynamic women who are committed to making a difference for women and girls. If that describes you, we'd love to have you join us. There are multiple ways to [get involved](#), so that you can choose the opportunity that best matches your talents and your available time.



Friends' Past President Michelle Durand-Adams was honored in the Iowa Women's Foundation's inaugural issue of *Ovation: A Tribute to Iowa Women and Girls*.



The Friends of ICSW was awarded the President's Volunteer Service award!

**The Martin Luther King, Jr.  
Lifetime Achievement Drum  
Major for Service**

### Gender Balance | Talent Bank

The Friends is helping Iowa communities to comply with the law requiring them to be gender balanced in their appointments to municipal commissions, committees, boards and councils.

As Iowa communities work to include qualified women in these decision-making and leadership positions, the Friends is connecting local governments with women interested in appointments.

<a href="#">Info For Local Governments</a>
<a href="#">Info For Individuals</a>
<a href="#">Sign Up Form For Women</a>
<a href="#">Talent Bank Database</a>

### Hall of Fame

**2014 Iowa Women's  
Hall of Fame Ceremony**  
(Free and Open to the Public)





Talent Bank Database

Search

First Name	Last Name	Email Address	City	County	Zip Code	LinkedIn URL
Bethany	Wilcoxon	bethany.wilcoxon@gmail.com	Des Moines	Polk	50312	<a href="http://www.linkedin.com/in/bethanywilcoxon">http://www.linkedin.com/in/bethanywilcoxon</a>
Ashley	Kasper	ashley.d.kasper@gmail.com	Iowa City	Johnson	52246	<a href="http://www.linkedin.com/in/ashleykasper">http://www.linkedin.com/in/ashleykasper</a>
Stephanie	Munsterman-Robinson	s.robinson@cedar-rapids.org	Cedar Rapids	Linn	52402	<a href="http://www.linkedin.com/pub/stefanie-munsterman-robinson/10/748/467">http://www.linkedin.com/pub/stefanie-munsterman-robinson/10/748/467</a>
Rachel	Keating	rachel.a.keating@faa.gov	West Des Moines	Polk	50265	<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/profile/view?id=21065012">https://www.linkedin.com/profile/view?id=21065012</a>
Lisa	Runkel	lisakayrunkel@gmail.com	Ankeny	Polk	50023	<a href="http://www.linkedin.com/in/lisakayrunkel/">http://www.linkedin.com/in/lisakayrunkel/</a>
Kathleen	Till Stange	Kathleen.TillStange@FBLFinancial.com	West Des Moines	Polk	50265	<a href="http://www.linkedin.com/in/kathleentillstange">http://www.linkedin.com/in/kathleentillstange</a>
Kerry	Vande Kieft	kerryvk@yahoo.com	Urbandale	Polk	50322	<a href="http://www.linkedin.com/pub/kerry-vande-kieft/9/576/844">http://www.linkedin.com/pub/kerry-vande-kieft/9/576/844</a>
Deb	Gervais	thedebeo@gmail.com	Ankeny	Polk	50023	
Chelsea	Lepley	chelsealepley@gmail.com	Des Moines	Polk	50315	<a href="http://www.linkedin.com/in/chelsealepley">http://www.linkedin.com/in/chelsealepley</a>
Kate	Varcoe	varcoes@mchsi.com	Cedar Rapids	Linn	52402	<a href="http://www.linkedin.com/pub/kate-varcoe/5a/63a/95b">http://www.linkedin.com/pub/kate-varcoe/5a/63a/95b</a>
Jennifer	Gibson	jgibson@tworiversbank.com	Des Moines	Polk	50310	
Janelle	Melohn	jmelohn@ag.state.ia.us	Nevada	Story	50201	<a href="http://www.linkedin.com/profile/view?id=127174025&amp;">http://www.linkedin.com/profile/view?id=127174025&amp;</a>
Laura	Beebe	lkellenbb@gmail.com	Johnston	Polk	50131	<a href="http://www.linkedin.com/pub/laura-beebe/13/141/61a">http://www.linkedin.com/pub/laura-beebe/13/141/61a</a>
Kristen	Corey	kristen.corey@iowa.gov	Ankeny	Polk	50023	<a href="http://www.linkedin.com/pub/kristen-corey/90/b93/228">http://www.linkedin.com/pub/kristen-corey/90/b93/228</a>
Becky	Stadlman	bstadlman@mchsi.com	Ankeny	Polk	50023	<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/pub/becky-stadlman/4/592/63a">https://www.linkedin.com/pub/becky-stadlman/4/592/63a</a>
Sue	Richardson	richarsj3@aol.com	Ottumwa	Wapello	52501	



# Do you know a woman interested in serving?

- Have them sign up for the Friends of ICSW talent bank database

[www.friendsoficsw.org](http://www.friendsoficsw.org)





Women You Know 2014

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- Brooke Axiotis
- Alicia Claypool
- Beth Coonan
- Joy Corning
- Des Moines Police Department
- Michelle Durand-Adams
- Betty Grundberg
- Rachelle Hunt Russian
- Gail Kotval
- Andrea McGuire
- Charlotte Nelson
- Jill Olsen
- Sally Pederson
- Phyllis Peters

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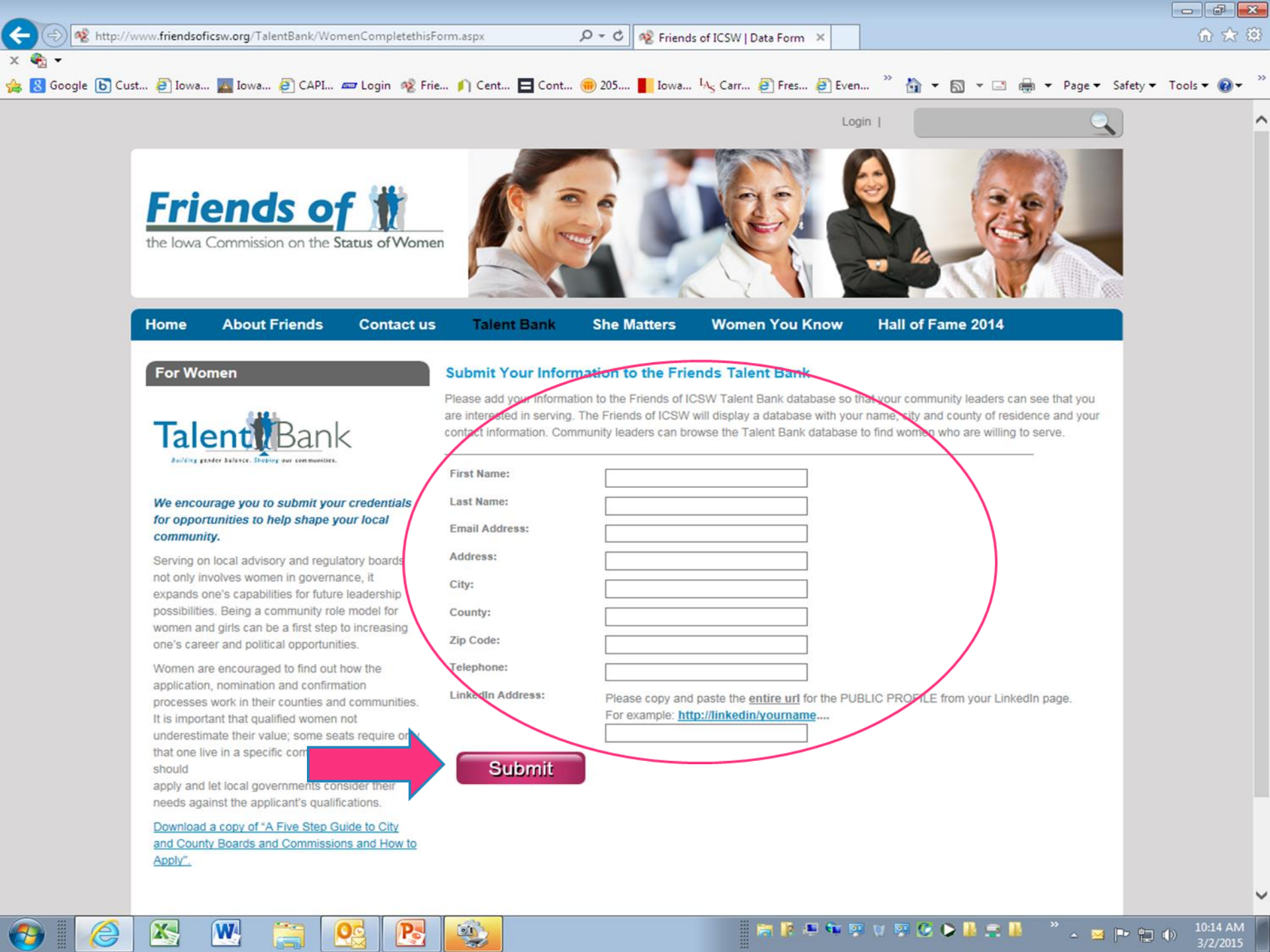
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Hall of Fame

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**For Women**



***We encourage you to submit your credentials for opportunities to help shape your local community.***

Serving on local advisory and regulatory boards not only involves women in governance, it expands one's capabilities for future leadership possibilities. Being a community role model for women and girls can be a first step to increasing one's career and political opportunities.

Women are encouraged to find out how the application, nomination and confirmation processes work in their counties and communities. It is important that qualified women not underestimate their value; some seats require only that one live in a specific community. Women should apply and let local governments consider their needs against the applicant's qualifications.

[Download a copy of "A Five Step Guide to City and County Boards and Commissions and How to Apply"](#)

**Submit Your Information to the Friends Talent Bank**

Please add your information to the Friends of ICSW Talent Bank database so that your community leaders can see that you are interested in serving. The Friends of ICSW will display a database with your name, city and county of residence and your contact information. Community leaders can browse the Talent Bank database to find women who are willing to serve.

First Name:

Last Name:

Email Address:

Address:

City:

County:

Zip Code:

Telephone:

LinkedIn Address:

Please copy and paste the entire url for the PUBLIC PROFILE from your LinkedIn page. For example: <http://linkedin/yourname....>

**Submit**

# Questions or need help?

- Kristen Corey, Program Planner  
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[www.friendsoficsw.org](http://www.friendsoficsw.org)